

AROUND THE CORPS IN BRIEF

New commander takes charge of MCRD/WRR

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO, Calif. — Maj. Gen. Jan Huly relinquished command of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and the Western Recruiting Region to Brig. Gen. John M. Paxton Jr. during a ceremony here Aug. 29.

Graduating from Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., with a bachelor of science and a master of civil engineering degree, Paxton was commissioned in 1974 through the Officer Candidate program.

Paxton has served twice with the 1st Marine Division, once with the 2nd MarDiv, and twice with the 3rd MarDiv, commanding at the platoon, company, battalion and regimental levels. He commanded 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment from April 1992 to June 1994. They deployed with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) and USS America Battle Group as Landing Force 6th Fleet and Joint Adaptive Task Force 93-2 in support of operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and later as United Nations Quick Reaction Force in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Paxton is a joint service officer, having served at United Nations Command and Combined Forces Command in Korea from 1989 to 1991 as amphibious operations officer and executive officer, Crisis Action Team.

Paxton completed an assignment as the director, Programs Division, Deputy Commandant of the Marine Corps for Programs and Resources, Headquarters Marine Corps. He assumed that billet in July 2001 upon completing a one-year tour as the Marine Corps Fellow (National Security) at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. Prior to that, he served for three years with the 1st MarDiv.

He then commanded 1st MarDiv from June 1998 until June 2000. In addition to The Basic School, his professional education includes United States Army Infantry Officer Advanced Course and the United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College.

In 1994, Paxton was a Federal Executive Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution.

I MEF transfers lead to Polish-led division

CAMP BABYLON, Iraq — The First Marine Expeditionary Force transferred authority for five provinces in southern Iraq to the Polish-led Multinational Division Central-South,



Fort A.P. Hill, Va. — A machine gun team from Alpha Co., Battalion Landing Team 1st Bn., 6th Marines, the ground combat element of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, provides covering fire during a recent assault against an urban training facility aboard Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

in a ceremony here Sept. 3.

In the amphitheater on Camp Babylon, former headquarters for I MEF, representatives of the 21 nations that make up MND-CS, Iraqi sheiks and leaders, and Marines, sailors and soldiers from I MEF participated in the ceremony.

Speaking to those assembled, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, Combined Joint Task Force 7 commanding general, thanked the outgoing Marines for their efforts in rebuilding Iraq.

Lieutenant Gen. James T. Conway, I MEF commanding general, spoke of the Marines’ accomplishments in rebuilding Iraq, which was a new role for the Corps.

“Over five months ago, as we headed south out of Baghdad for these provinces, we did so with a certain amount of trepidation,” said Conway. “Marines don’t traditionally do nation-building or security operations. We have no doctrine for it. We weren’t sure where the resources would come from. And we weren’t sure how we would be received by the people of southern Iraq, who had seen American forces attack up through their governates. Well, in some regards, a negative can become a positive.”

Upon arriving in southern Iraq, the

Marines set to work, seizing funds from former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein’s government to rebuild the country. Over \$40 million dollars, from both seized funds and the Coalition Provisional Authority, were spent in addressing the needs of the Iraqi people.

With the division now responsible for stability and security in southern Iraq, the Marines of I MEF are preparing to return to Camp Pendleton, Calif. Most of the forces have now returned to Kuwait to begin preparing to return home. A small contingent of 1st Battalion 7th Marine Regiment will remain in place to oversee the remaining security oversight around the city of Najaf, but will soon follow the rest of I MEF home.

Bulk Fuels Co. helps Iraqis unload fuel

AD DIWANIYA, Iraq — Marines of Bulk Fuel Company, Combat Service Support Group-11, recently began taking their skills to the local railway station and fuel depot. There, they unloaded up to 200,000 gallons of diesel fuel per day for the citizens of Ad Diwaniya.

Combat Service Support Group-11 has been filling more than 200 vehicles per day with up to 30,000 gallons of JP-8 fuel, and still finds time to empty the railroad cars of diesel fuel for the local Iraqi town.

“The Bulk Fuelers seized a great opportunity,” said Navy Lt. Michael Leonard, commanding officer, Engineer Company, CSSG-11. “We were working across the street helping the Army pump fuel from the Army tankers then we noticed the railcars were coming in here and that they also needed help. The Bulk Fuelers took a lot of initiative, were proactive, came out here and figured out how to do it.”

The “figuring out” meant finding a way to hook their four-inch hoses from 600 gallons per minute pumps up to the three-inch and two and a half-inch nozzles attached to the 42 gpm pumps that the Iraqis were using. The solution was creating makeshift nozzles and connections to keep the fuel flowing from the railcars, through the pump, and into the local fuel depot. The Marines determined the best way to construct the connectors and used skills from local Iraqis to put them together.

When all the pieces were in place, the

Marines pumped fuel faster than the Iraqis had been able to do it before.

The Marines plan on keeping the fuel flowing just as quickly after they leave.

“We’re going to try to procure them another 600 gpm pump like the one we’re using right now,” said Leonard, a 31-year-old native of Las Vegas, “We want to give them the hoses, give them the stuff they need to get started so that they can do this on their own.”

VMAQ-4 Seahawks fired up after exercise

NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE, Nev. — Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 4 recently completed Exercise Red Flag here.

The squadron participated in the fast-paced international exercise for two weeks to fine tune their war fighting abilities through a simulated combat environment.

“The squadron was extremely pleased with the entire evolution,” said Capt. Jared Stone, electronic countermeasures officer with VMAQ-4. “Any time you participate in a large force exercise like Red Flag, the experience gained is invaluable.”

As an international exercise, the squadron was exposed to a new perspective of how to operate as a coalition team.

“Since this was a coalition exercise with personnel and aircraft from multiple nations, it provided an opportunity to work with systems and tactics we are not usually exposed to,” he said. “In a world where joint and coalition operations are becoming part of the norm, this kind of training is extremely important and hard to come by here at home.”

Coalition training exercises can be a rare opportunity for Marine units, but Red Flag gives squadrons the chance to show their skills to joint and allied forces in a large-scale operation.

“Getting out and flying with other services and other nations in a large scale, simulated combat environment helps us to stay sharp and maintain the combat edge that we need to take with us into battle,” he said. “Here in Cherry Point we work hard to provide good and realistic training for our aircrews, but there is no way that we can replicate the experience of Red Flag. Launching with a 70 jet package to fight highly trained aggressor aircraft along with an integrated air defense system is not something that we can simulate during normal operations here.”

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